

REMARKS

Section 112 Objection

The Office Action objects to claim 15 for lacking antecedent basis. Applicant has amended claim 15 and the term lacking basis has been deleted.

Section 103 Rejections

The Office Action rejected claims 13-15, 28 and 33 as unpatentable over Yachia in view of Mikus, and claim 34 as unpatentable in view of these references combined with Datta.

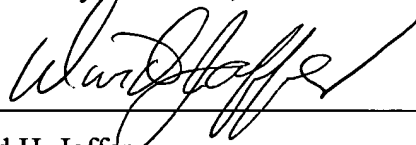
Independent claim 33 has been amended to specify that the present invention includes a biodegradable coating on the exterior of the stent. When the coating degrades, the size of the stent is reduced. This facilitates removal of the stent, if required.

Applicant believes claim 33 as amended distinguishes over the cited art and is in condition for allowance along with remaining dependent claims 15 and 28. The invention as now claimed is not taught or suggested by the prior art.

CONCLUSION

Applicant has amended the claims and explained the differences between the amended claims and the cited references. If any further questions arise prior to Notice of Allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney at the number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I, Diana Dearing, certify that the enclosed papers are being deposited with the U. S. Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: MAIL STOP FEE AMENDMENT, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on December 19, 2003.

